

PEACHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
Monday, March 9, 2015
Peacham School Cafeteria
UNAPPROVED

PRESENT:

Board: Mark Clough, Adam Kane, Mike Heath
Administration: Judy Ross, Mathew Forest, Pat Amsden
Clerk to the School Board: Melissa Laurita Kohl
Public: None

Mathew Forest called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

1. Matt asked for nomination for Chair of the Board.
 - (a) Adam moves to nominate Mark Clough as Chair of the Board. Mike seconds. So moved.
2. Additions to the agenda
 - (a) Orientation to the Board for new members Mike and Adam
 - i. Mark explained the way that the School Board worked in regard to meetings, agendas, and the fact that any time two board members speak to each other, they form a quorum, which creates a public meeting.
 - ii. Matt explained the chain of command for parent concerns. If a parent voices a concern they are directed back to the teacher/principal. If the parent has met with the teacher and/or principal and are still not satisfied, then it comes to the board. The school board's role is policy and budget.
 - iii. Matt said that if the school board has any issue with him, let him know immediately so that he can work on it.
 - iv. Adam asked about the structure of the board.
 - A. Judy reports to Matt.
 - B. Matt is the sole employee of the school board. The Peacham school board is a member of the CCSU board.
 - C. Peacham has input on CCSU policies and budget.
 - D. If the school board has issues with Judy's performance, the Board goes to Matt.
 - v. Matt will call the VT School Board Association (VSBA) to ask if former Board member Wynne can be appointed to continue teacher negotiations.
 - vi. Matt and Mark explained how teacher negotiations were conducted.
 - vii. Matt and Mark explained that executive sessions can only be about confidential and private information concerning students and/or personnel.

3. Public Input

- (a) No public

4. Administrative Reports

- (a) No administrative reports due to being the first meeting after Town Meeting Day.

5. Old Business

- (a) Discussion of costs for PES building energy issues (Pat Amsden)

- i. Pat presented minutes from a 2/5/15 meeting concerning the PES energy upgrade
- ii. Mat, Pat, Judy, and Cheryl attended
- iii. There were three pressing issues that should be addressed immediately.
 - A. Replacing the main control of the heating system so that the units can shut off at night.
 - B. Insulate above the bathrooms with spray foam.
 - C. Caulk around the heating units.

- (b) Talk about schedule for community forum on the topic.

- i. The school board wants to wait to schedule the community meetings on this topic until they have a better understanding of the costs.

6. New Business

- (a) Review Board values for the School in relation to the Town.

- i. Mark asked the new board members about their values concerning the school. He explained that the old board was very interested in maintaining a town school.
- ii. Adam said that he said it all on Town Meeting Day. The bottom line for him is having a school in Peacham. He thinks that what we do now works really well but is open to different possibilities.
- iii. Mike agreed with Adam.
- iv. They both agreed that keeping upper grade school choice is important.
- v. The new board members wanted to know where the legislation was. Matt said that it had been voted out of the education committee. It has to go to appropriations and the House and then the Senate.
- vi. Mat says we need to be a front runner and have a good plan. If the value in the town is to keep the school it is very doable but we need to be proactive about figuring out how that will look.
- vii. Judy said that community members want an opportunity to work with the school board about the values of the town and to discuss what they want in community forums.
- viii. Matt said that we do not have a values conversation with the community at this point. What we need to do is figure out what we can do and then present that to the board who will present the options to the community.

- ix. Matt said that one possibility was to merge the Peacham and Barnet schools. All elementary school students would go to the Barnet school and all middle school students would go to the Peacham school. Middle school students would be able to go to a new school, which will help them get ready for a transition to high school. The observatory is right here. We would need to put in a science lab. Matt has spoken to the Barnet principal, who is interested.
 - x. Adam said that he hates to ask this in front of Judy, but wouldn't the only cost savings be the principal?
 - xi. Matt explained that if this happened all students would be absorbed into the Barnet classrooms, with no need to hire additional teachers. He said that it is important to not make it personal. The elementary school would stay open next year and would close or be in transition the following year.
 - xii. Judy said that she had some creative ideas and wanted to know if she could share her ideas about the future of the school.
 - xiii. Mark explained to Judy there would be future time and place that her ideas would be valued but that we as a Board are not there and will do this with her and the community at some future time.
 - xiv. It is the Superintendent and Boards goal to keep a school in Town and provide 9-12 school choice.
 - xv. Matt said that he is working on other options, too. He said one option would be to merge the CCSU with the Blue Mountain School but he did not want to do that because it would over extend the CCSU.
 - xvi. Judy wanted to know who she could share her ideas with and if she could speak to Shawn, the Barnet principal.
 - xvii. Matt said that the playground group should continue working towards the new playground but that he was happy that community members at Town Meeting wanted to also make it appropriate for adults as that would work with middle school students.
 - xviii. Adam said that intuitively he did not see this building as a good space for middle school students.
- (b) Introduction to Board work for new Board members, VSBA, A/P signing, Paycheck register signing, CCSU role and meetings, G-mail set up, 3 member board restrictions, etc.
- i. Mark moves to authorize Mike Heath to be the accounts payable agent and to sign warrants. Adam seconds. So moved.
 - ii. Pat said that all accounts payable have gone through an approval process and several sets of eyes.
- (c) Discuss Town Meeting follow up in regard to budget questions raised during meeting.
- i. See points 8(a)iC and 8(a)iE

7. Financial

- (a) Pat Amsden will discuss changes to budget and Tax Rate
 - i. Pat explained the voted budget to the school board.
 - A. Peacham approved the general fund budget and the food service budget. The food service budget includes \$61,000 in expenses and \$61,000 in revenues so it's a wash.
 - B. Historically, Peacham has only voted on the general fund budget. Towns in Vermont can either vote to approve the general fund budget only or the general fund budget and the food service budget. Either way is acceptable because the food service budget is revenue-expenditure neutral so it does not affect taxes.
 - C. The \$6,000 transfer to the capital fund was not represented in the budget because it was a separate article that was brought to a vote and was approved.
 - D. This voted budget includes all of the approved articles.
 - E. There was an error in the budget spreadsheet in the education spending line of \$13,060.
 - ii. Explanation of final voted budget and education spending
 - A. Proposed budget: \$1,511,213
 - B. Article added to transfer to capital reserve: \$6,000
 - C. Voters added money for playground: \$6,295
 - D. Fund balance used in proposed budget: (\$6,500)
 - Actual fund balance after audit: \$11,400
 - Change in fund balance: \$4,900, which results in a reduction of the overall budget by (\$4,900)
 - E. Error in education spending line: (\$13,060)
 - F. FINAL BUDGET EQUALS TOTAL OF ALL ARTICLES VOTED: \$1,505,548.**
 - G. The difference is \$5,665, which results in a reduction of the tax rate of \$0.01, bringing the tax rate down to 1.66

8. Other Business

(a) Executive Session

- i. Mark moves to go into executive session about private and confidential personnel and student issues at 7:45pm. Adam seconds. So moved.
- ii. The board came out of executive session at 8:30pm.
- iii. No action taken.

9. Future Agenda Items

- (a) The next meeting is set for Monday April 13th, 2015 at 5:30PM. 5:30PM will be the new meeting time.

10. Adjourn.